



News Release

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Death with Dignity Act annual report shows 121 people participated in 2012

A total of 376 terminally ill adults have received medication since law passed in 2009

OLYMPIA — The state's fourth annual Death with Dignity Act report released today shows that 104 people who were dispensed lethal doses of medication in 2012 are known to have died. The report confirms at least 83 of the participants died after taking the medication in 2012, when 121 people in Washington requested and received the medication.

According to the report by the Washington State Department of Health, the 121 prescriptions were written by 87 different physicians and dispensed by 30 different pharmacists. The report covers January 1 to December 31, 2012. Participation increased 17 percent in 2012 from 2011. Since the 2009 law was passed, 376 terminally ill adults have received medication in the state.

Death with Dignity participants who died in 2012 were between the ages of 35 and 95. More than 90 percent lived west of the Cascades. Most had cancer. As in previous years, many of the patients who received medication told prescribing physicians about concern over loss of autonomy as a reason for participating.

Under Washington's Death with Dignity Act, the Department of Health collects information from patients and providers who choose to participate. The agency also monitors compliance with reporting requirements, and produces an annual report.

The [2012 Death with Dignity Act report](#) and information about the [Washington State Death with Dignity Act](#) are on the [Department of Health website](#) (doh.wa.gov). Also, [find the Department of Health on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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